

C-A OPERATIONS PROCEDURES MANUAL

1.22 Return to Work and Restricted (Light) Duty Work Policy

Collider-Accelerator Department

Return to Work and Restricted (Light) Duty Work Policy¹

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Introduction

Restricted (Light) Duty provides employees who have experienced illness or injury with work during the time that they are unable to complete all job duties. Laboratory policy requires managers to arrange a minimum of thirty days of Restricted Duty whether due to an occupational or personal medical illness or injury. Full details of this policy can be obtained from Human Resources, but this is the basic requirement. The program involves monitoring an injured employee's progress and identifying temporary work opportunities that are suited to physical capacity guidelines established by the Occupational Medicine Clinic (OMC).

The employee should bring notes from personal healthcare providers to OMC, where they will be kept on file in the employee's medical record. OMC will then make a written recommendation to the supervisor regarding the specific restrictions. OMC may make recommendations regarding Restricted Duty for employees who are not under the care of a personal healthcare provider. OMC may determine that the recommendations of a personal healthcare provider may be more or less than appropriate, and wherever possible will seek to resolve these issues between OMC and the healthcare provider.

All restrictions should be arranged through OMC and will be documented as such in the employee medical record on file at OMC. Partial activity during recuperation from illness or injury promotes the healing process and reduces lost time from work. Wherever possible, Restricted Duty should be recommended over absence from work, unless the OMC professional feels that return to work in any capacity is not medically advisable.

Restricted Work: Purposes and Benefits

Employees are our most valued assets. Their safety and well being are a major concern for the Department. When our employees are injured or ill it is our intent to assist them with a quick recovery and return them to meaningful employment.

¹ Procedures for Employees and Managers Occupational Illness or Injury (OI), <http://www.bnl.gov/HR/OCCMED/OIprocedures.htm>

To that end, a period of Restricted Duty work:

- Minimizes the injury's impact on the employee and the Department
- Promotes rapid recovery from injuries/illness
- Provides a safe and timely transition back to work

Whenever the Collider-Accelerator Department can offer an employee meaningful temporary Restricted Duty, both the employee and the Department benefit:

The Employee:

- Tends to recover more quickly
- Participates in some type of work activity as soon as he/she is medically able
- Experiences a smoother transition back to regular duty
- Feels improved self-esteem in spite of the medical condition
- Maintains relationships with co-workers and management
- Reinforces management's commitment to employee welfare

The Employer:

- Keeps a trained and experienced worker
- Reduces the costs associated with the loss of production and replacement of an employee
- Improves work ethic
- Promotes employee morale/security
- Fosters better communications with employees

Eligibility Criteria

Restricted Duty is recommended by the OMC when:

- The employee's medical condition temporarily prevents the employee from performing full regular duties, including full-time work
- The OMC physician:
 - Feels that the condition is temporary, so far as can be determined and probably will improve given time and or treatment
 - Feels that the maximum medical improvement has not yet taken place
 - Has provided instructions for specific restrictions in writing to the supervisor

General Information - Guidelines

Supervisors should evaluate OMC recommendations for Restricted Duty closely. The OMC follows all employees on Restricted Duty at least weekly. The appropriateness of continuing Restricted Duty will be continuously reviewed by both the manager and the OMC professional. The following are some general guidelines about Restricted Duty.

- Restricted work assignments are *temporary* to facilitate return to *regular* work and are not to become permanent accommodations

- Only OMC can recommend permanent limitations, since these may impact employment (This is not generally done by OMC unless maximum medical improvement has been reached. The need for permanent accommodations should be brought to the attention of the OMC Manager or his/her designee.)
- Extension of Restricted Duty beyond the 30 mandated days should be based upon discussions with the OMC professional and upper level managers (The advisability of extending the restrictions beyond the minimum may vary related to the medical condition/ injury or manpower needs.)
- Restricted Duty should be extended only when it is determined by the OMC that the additional time would facilitate a return to full regular duties
- Restricted Duty extensions should not adversely affect the Department's operational goals or the objectives of the transitional work process
- Restricted Duty assignments must be offered immediately upon release for Restricted Duty by the OMC physician
- There is no limit on the number of employees permitted to participate in Restricted Duty at any one time; however, issues of multiple employees on Restricted Duty at any given time may impact upon operations and need to be discussed with management
- Restricted Duty should be considered temporary; it is not meant to apply to an employee's work assignments on a long-term basis
- Restricted Duty assignments can be offered for the number of hours and days authorized by the OMC physician
- The assignment can be less than 40 hours per week but cannot exceed 40 hours per week
- The employee will get paid at his/her full customary rate while on Restricted Duty

Supervisor Communication with Employees Who Do Not Report for Work

When an employee does not show up for work **they must call their supervisor the first day that they are out of work and tell the supervisor the reason, explicitly noting if the reason is a work related injury or illness. If they do not call by noon**, then as soon as practicable the supervisor must attempt to determine by phone call or by visit the reason why. If the employee indicates he/she is out because they were injured at work, the supervisor must facilitate the communication between the worker and the BNL Occupational Medicine Clinic as soon as practicable **so that the Clinic can properly manage the case.**

Supervisors should communicate daily with employees who are on Restricted Duty status.

Using OPM 9.4.5 "C-A Accident/Illness Investigation"

The supervisor must help document information related to an employee's injury/illness. The supervisor must use OPM 9.4.5 for all injuries. Using the procedure will provide:

- Consistency in gathering all pertinent information surrounding an injury
- A quick reference resource for C-AD management
- Organization and thoroughness
- Proper documentation

Monthly Return-to-Work Strategy Meetings

The C-AD Associate Chair for Operations should conduct a monthly return-to-work strategy meeting with appropriate Division Heads, supervisors and others to discuss each case involving an employee on Restricted Duty or off work. A pro-active plan of action must be agreed upon and steps assigned to transition the employee from injury to return to regular work. Contact with OMC should be maintained since OMC follows all employees on restricted work (and all employees losing time for occupational illness or injury) on a minimum weekly basis.

The return-to-work strategy meetings should include:

- The Associate Chair for Operations
- Division Heads (Division Heads may opt not to come or may send a representative.)
- The employee's immediate supervisor (Prior to the monthly meeting, the supervisor should contact OMC to check the status of the employee and be ready to advise the Associate Chair for Operations at the time of the meeting. The supervisor should contact the OMC nurse (x 3670), who will be able to advise which OMC staff member is providing the medical case management for a particular individual.)

Before the monthly meeting, the employee's direct supervisor should talk with the employee to determine the employee's:

- Thoughts about the employee's ability to return to work and/or current job assignment
- Date of the next doctor's appointment
- Need for modification of duties to support progress toward return to full duties.

Employees not at work are to be contacted at least **weekly** by the immediate supervisor. Contacts with the employee are to be documented in the supervisor's files or log. Supervisors should:

- Review the current medical/work status with the employee
- Verify that the employee's needs are being met
- Discuss plans for return to work (restricted or regular duty)
- Secure the employee's ideas on recovery and return-to-work opportunities
- Advise the employee to contact OMC on a regular basis, as specified by the OMC

Supervisors should review Restricted Duty assignments with the employee **weekly** to:

- Review the appropriateness of the work assignment
- Reinforce safe work behaviors/methods
- Request revisions in the Restricted Duty from OMC if it seems relevant
- Provide appropriate communications with employee's supervisor when the employee is working in a different Group

Restricted Duty Assignments

- Supervisors should contact C-AD Associate Chair for Operations as soon as they are aware that a worker is to go on Restricted Duty.

- Restricted Duty is to be assigned during the same general work shift and on the same workweek that employee was assigned before he/she became injured. In the event Restricted Duty is not available in the employee's regular Group and/or regular shift, suitable work assignments in other C-AD Groups/shifts should be made available.
- No overtime is allowed for Restricted Duty participants.

The assignments must be designed to provide meaningful tasks to the employee, assist with the employee's recovery, enhance productivity and reduce cost.

Restricted Duty is not Restricted Duty is

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| * Punitive | * Productive and Necessary |
| * Permanent | * Temporary |
| * A Promotion | * Supervised |
| * A "Job" | * Rotational/Variable Tasks |

Restricted Duty Offer/Refusal of Restricted Duty Assignment

Employees are seen at OMC and given a copy of the Restricted Duty slip. The OMC advises employees to report back to their supervisor with the slip after leaving the OMC.

If an employee refuses the assignment by not arriving for work on the date and time specified, the C-AD Department Chair, OMC nurse and Human Resources Division must be notified immediately.